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SUMMARY

1985 GENERAL PLAN
(REVISED)



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city planning Desert Hot Springs

J F DAVIDSON AMECUS ASSOCIATES



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INTRODUCTION

The original general plan for the City of Desert Hot Springs was adopted in March 1968. In the six year period since the preparation of that plan many changes have taken place within the City, the County, and the nation as a whole. The immutable pace of change requires a reinvestigation of the goals and objectives of the City on a continuing basis. The general plan, which reflects the community goals and objectives, must therefore be periodically revised. This is the purpose of the study and analyses which have preceeded the adoption of the revised general plan.

The basic general plan document prepared in 1968 remains a viable source of information and guidance for the City. As a result, this report does not present a comprehensive treatment, rather it is a summary of the changes which have occurred from 1968 to the present and presents new direction for the City.

This revision of the general plan is a product of many months of study by citizens of the community, City officials, and the planning consultants. A series of technical reports were prepared by the consultant and presented to study sessions attended by members of the Citizens Advisory Planning Commission, the City Planning Commission, other City officials, and the general public. In addition to reviewing the technical reports, the study sessions provided valuable input to the consultants about community goals and objectives. At the end of this process a draft general plan was prepared and reviewed. Finally, public hearings were scheduled prior to adoption.

This report presents the land use and circulation elements of the general plan. Copies of other mandatory elements are available at City Hall.

BACKGROUND DATA

Population

The State of California estimated the City of Desert Hot Springs resident population as 2,930 as of January 1, 1974, an increase from 1973 of slightly over two percent. This represents a seven percent increase since 1970, and a doubling since 1960. The compound growth rate between 1970 and 1974 was approximately 1.9 percent per year. Between 1960 and 1970 the compound growth rate was about 7.3 percent per year. The growth rate was greater from 1960 to 1965 than from 1965 to 1970. This indicates that the growth rate has slowed considerably and probably reached a plateau.

Age-Sex composition

In 1960 males comprised 48.6 percent of the total population of the City. By 1970 this percentage had dropped to 46.7 percent. The corresponding figures for females are 51.4 percent and 53.3 percent.

The population within the City got older on an average between 1960 and 1970. Although this trend is expected to continue, the rate of age growth will be considerably slower. In 1960 60.0 percent of the total population in the City was over 45 years of age; by 1970 this percentage had grown to 73.7 percent. The 65 and over group has more than tripled since 1960.

The median age in the City in 1970 was 62. For men the median was 62.6 and 61.4 for females.

Education

In 1970 the median educational level of the residents of the City was 12.1 years. Slightly over half of the residents have a minimum of a high school education.

Occupation

The occupations of City residents may be divided into four approximately equal parts: managerial and professional, white collar sales and clerical, service workers, and laborers.

Income

Median family income in the City rose approximately forty-five percent from 1960 to 1970. The 1970 median family income of \$ 5,895 is somewhat misleading in that it includes inflation. On the same basis, the median family income in 1974 has been estimated to be about \$ 7,800. The greatest income growth has occurred in the \$ 10,000 to \$ 15,000 bracket.

Population Projections

The population projections prepared in 1968 reflected compound growth rates of 4.9 percent per year, 5.5 percent per year, and 6.1 percent per year for low, midrange and high estimates respectively. Estimates of county-wide growth rates by the County of Riverside in 1970 reflected compound growth rates of 3.0 percent, 3.5 percent, and 4.0 percent respectively. It is felt that continuing resource constraints will result in lower growth rates than originally predicted. The revised population projections are based on annual compound growth rates of 1.5 percent, 2.0 percent and 2.5 percent for the low, midrange and high estimates respectively. See Table 1.

TABLE 1
POPULATION ESTIMATES

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>
Low		2,950	3,200	3,400	3,700
Midrange	Actual 2,738	3,000	3,350	3,700	4,050
High		3,100	3,500	4,000	4,500

Seasonal Population

The City of Desert Hot Springs attracts second-home and winter-home residents due to its climate and location within the Coachella Valley. The existence of mineral baths also helps attract visitors. It has been estimated that the seasonal visitors to the City in 1970 were about 2,350 persons. This seasonal population is expected to grow at a rate similar to the permanent population. Therefore, by 1990 about 3,550 persons are expected to be seasonal residents.

Housing Units

In 1970 the City contained 1,832 dwelling units. Since the Census, building permits have been issued for an additional 129 units, as of July 1, 1974. This brings the total to 1,961 in 1974. Approximately 21.9 percent of the total units were vacant in 1970.

Household Size

The median household size was 1.8 persons per dwelling unit in 1970 in the City. Over four-fifths of the total occupied units had one or two persons per unit. Taking into consideration the age distribution of the population within the City, many of these units are occupied by retired or semi-retired individuals and families.

There are indications from other portions of the Coachella Valley that new home purchasers tend to be younger, less affluent and have more children than has been true in the past. This may portend some changes for the City over the long-run, however, it is expected that the median household size will not change significantly over the planning period.

Housing Value

In 1970 the median value of all owner occupied housing units was \$ 15,100, with 64.2 percent between \$ 10,000 and \$ 20,000. With inflation this median value is approximately \$ 19,100 at present. For renter occupied units the median rent in 1970 was \$ 81 per month. This rent is equivalent to a housing unit of \$ 7,800. Correspondingly, with inflation these rental values are about \$ 102 per month rent and a unit value of \$ 9,850 in 1974. Taking both owner occupied and renter occupied units together, the median value in 1970 was approximately \$ 12,050 and \$ 15,250 in 1974.

Housing Demand

The revised population estimates for 1990 range from 3,700 to 4,500 persons. Housing these residents and the seasonal visitors will require between 2,500 and 3,000 total units. Therefore, between 500 and 1,000 additional dwelling units will be required between 1974 and 1990 to accomodate the expected population increases, or from 33 to 67 new units per year. These estimates do not include hotel rooms for short-term visitors.

Retail Trade

The City had taxable sales of approximately \$ 4.2 million for the year ending September 30, 1973, from about 85,000 square feet of retail floor area. The retail establishment mix within the City is such that over fifty percent of the resident retail shopping dollar goes to areas outside the City.

Local Traffic

Approximately 9,300 trip-ends per day are presently generated by year round residents of the City. The traffic grows to about 11,900 trip-ends per day when seasonal residents are present. The corresponding estimates for the anticipated 1990 population are 11,700 to 14,000 trip-ends per day during the off-season and 15,000 to 18,000 during the season. Existing street capacities appear adequate to handle this traffic.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives adopted at the outset of the planning program shape the entire planning effort. These goals reflect the values of the community; the plan translates the goals into concrete policy action. The goals herein presented include many of those enumerated in the original plan and are reemphasized; some of the goals are new. New or old they all underlie the planning activities of the City.

General

1. Capitalize on and develop the great resort and tourism potential of the Desert Hot Springs area. Encourage the construction of more active resort facilities to supplement the relatively passive type of facility that presently predominates.

2. Prepare for the anticipated population increase in a manner which will accomodate this growth and yet assure continued development of a sound economic base.

3. Create an environment based on the unique desert quality that will appeal to tourist use as well as guarantee the tranquility desired by the permanent residents.

4. Provide a basis for coordinating public and private decision-making through development and implementation of the general plan.

5. Promote the economic development of the Desert Hot Springs area through the expansion of tourism, and the provision of additional facilities for the tourist and recreation oriented visitor.

Residential Areas

1. Foster stability within the present residential areas; encourage the growth of new residential areas in an orderly fashion consistent with the provision of urban amenities.

2. Encourage construction on close-in, already subdivided, vacant lots to minimize leap-frog development.

3. Encourage the development of multiple residential projects adjacent to and in conjunction with significant open spaces.

4. Encourage the development of a wide variety of housing types with varying architectural character, amenities and price differentiation.

5. Encourage the development of residential areas designed to serve the needs of retired persons, convenient to shopping, cultural and recreation facilities.

Commercial Areas

1. Encourage and enhance the development of the downtown area to serve the needs of residents as well as tourists.

2. Foster the nucleation of services in the downtown.

3. Encourage the development of neighborhood shopping centers within the fabric of the planning area as the need arises.

4. Encourage the development of hotels, spas, motels, restaurants, amusements, and other commercial recreation facilities in a coordinated fashion so as to expand the economic base of the area and protect the established stable residential areas.

5. Encourage the creation of a 'hotel visitor center' wherein tourists may find many of their recreational objectives.

Industrial Areas

1. Provide for the diversification of the economic base through encouraging the location of industries which are compatible with the area resources, climate and appearance.

2. Provide adequate industrial sites near in to the center of activities to encourage the employment of retired and semi-retired persons. Or, as an alternate, develop a transportation system to accomplish these same objectives.

Transportation

1. Develop a unified circulation system, including bicycle, pedestrian and public transit, designed to serve the needs of the residents and visitors to the City.

2. Determine the priorities for street maintenance and improvement based on a hierarchy of streets and ways.

3. Encourage the development of a general aviation airport to serve the needs of the Coachella Valley as a whole.

4. Encourage the development of an industrial park around the airport, thereby protecting the approaches from urbanization and encouraging the

the location of desirable industry in the area.

Community Facilities

1. Provide a civic center, parks, mini-parks, schools and other community facilities based on the demands of population growth and its characteristics.

2. Encourage the development of cultural facilities as part of the Civic Center.

Community Economic Base

1. Actively seek means which will permit Desert Hot Springs to compete effectively in the commercial, industrial and resort growth of the Coachella Valley, according to community values.

2. Encourage the expansion of the tax base through the attraction of new service and industrial facilities which will provide increased employment.

Environment

1. Establish and maintain an open space system which will conserve natural resources, preserve scenic beauty, define urban form, provide open space for outdoor recreation, and foster public health and safety.

2. In all development decisions be sensitive to the unique character of the desert environment.

3. Encourage the construction of facilities which minimize demands on energy resources.

4. Encourage good design which harmonizes with the environment and does not detract from scenic views and vistas.

5. Encourage the development of noise barriers and controls throughout the City.

6. Encourage new proposals which minimize the potential for generation of air pollution.

7. Foster the development of vegetation screening which will help dissipate the energy of sand laden wind currents.

LAND USE CONCEPTS

The general plan is based on several important concepts relative to the needs of the City of Desert Hot Springs. These are explained here to aid in the comprehension of the plan objectives.

Grouping of Related Uses

The grouping and concentration of related uses aids in the development of community identity and eases the requirements of the provision of urban amenities. The concept does not envision the isolation of uses by type, rather it groups uses according to the common objectives of the users. Within any land use designation shown on the plan there may be a diversity of related uses.

Concentration of Development

At present the City is very sparsely developed with large vacant areas incorporated into the core and adjacent areas. The plan incorporates the increased utilization of these vacant areas prior to further development at the fringes of the City. This plan would result in more efficient utilization of the existing urban amenities and defer construction of new extensions of utilities.

Central Business District

The central business district is the nucleus of the City about which the major retail and commercial activities revolve. It should represent the major cultural and social center as well. At present the central business district functions are linear and extended along the main arteries of the City. The plan represents a center oriented concept with increased concentration of commercial activities in the central business district and and the curtailment of strip commercial development.

Tourist Activity Centers

In the development of the City to present some natural clustering of spas, hotels and motels has occurred. This trend is emphasized and expanded in the plan. Tourist activity centers should provide a wide range of services for the visitor to the City.

CIRCULATION CONCEPTS

The circulation element of the general plan is concerned with the provision of automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle paths in and through the community. The objective is to create a hierarchy of streets and ways which will provide local circulation, thoroughfares for city-wide traffic, and access to major arterials for intercity travel. The plan provides a grid of major arterial streets over the matrix of the City.

North Palm Springs

Dos Palmas
: Corners



CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

GENERAL PLAN

LEGEND

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- COMERCIAL
- SPA-RESORT-TOURIST
- INDUSTRIAL
- CIVIC CENTER
- ARTERIAL STREETS
- OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION



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